

CONGRESSMAN

Jo Bonner



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A VISIT TO IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN

Earlier this month, four of my colleagues from the House of Representatives and I were honored to be asked by Republican Leader John Boehner (R-OH) to travel to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Our visit to Iraq came just one week after the country successfully held provincial elections without any significant violence, an important milestone that reinforced the progress achieved by the surge. However, as General Raymond Odierno and Ambassador Ryan Crocker reminded us, the gains are still very fragile, and we must sustain the successes and gains we have made.

Our delegation spent a day and a half in Afghanistan, first landing in the capital city, Kabul, where we saw firsthand the long-term challenges our military face. Afghanistan is one of the world's poorest and least developed nations with challenges that make a successful mission there much more complex than Iraq.

It has become increasingly apparent that more troops are needed in southern Afghanistan, portions of which have become terrorist strongholds.

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Left: I handed out moon pies and Mardi Gras beads to Alabama troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. Pictured with me is Master Gunnery Sergeant Wiggins of Mobile.

Right: Pictured with me at the Kabul airport are (l to r) Armed Services Committee Ranking Republican John McHugh, Intelligence Committee Ranking Republican Pete Hoekstra, Congressman Tom Latham, Republican Leader John Boehner, and Republican Whip Eric Cantor.



Congressman Jo Bonner

is pleased to host



Alabama Economic Summit 2014: *Our People & Our Economy*

With Special Guest Governor Bob Riley

Friday, February 20, 2009

Arthur R. Outlaw Convention Center

Mobile, Alabama

Registration - 8:00 a.m.

Program - 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

The purpose of the day-long summit will be to review recent changes to the economy, identify new challenges and opportunities for Alabama, and to determine how to position our region to make the most of these opportunities. In particular, special emphasis will be placed on workforce development in light of anticipated job losses in some areas and new job opportunities in others. The summit should result in specific recommendations for action within the next five years.

The Summit is free to attend.

There is an optional lunch available for \$25

For more information regarding this event,
go to <http://bonner.house.gov>.

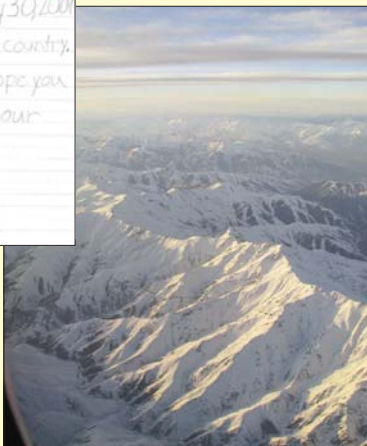


Left: In Afghanistan, I visited with Marine Lt. Col. Mike Jernigan, who was once Auburn University's mascot, Aubie.

Right and below: Two examples of "Dear Soldier" letters and cards made by students at St. Paul's, St. Ignatius, Mary B. Austin Elementary and Dodge Elementary schools. I hand delivered the students' cards to Alabama troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Right: Snow-covered mountains in Afghanistan, showing how difficult and unforgiving the terrain here is.



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This trip afforded me the opportunity to visit with many of the fine men and women from south Alabama who are currently serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Every soldier, sailor, airman, and marine with whom I spoke expressed extreme pride in the job they have done and the role they are playing.

Without question, we have the most well-trained, most capable men and women serving in our military. We are very fortunate to have them representing the very best of America while, at the same time, working to bring peace and freedom to some parts of the world that have never known it.



Kimberly Barton of Birmingham currently serves as an intern in my Washington, D.C. office. Kimberly, a graduate of Auburn University, plans to attend graduate school in the fall and earn a master's degree in speech pathology.

From the mailbox...

Dear Congressman Bonner,

My wife and I wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the time you shared with us this week. We were encouraged to know that we as the people of the United States of America can still express out thoughts and concerns to those we have chosen to serve us.

Your hospitality, kindness and objectivity will long be remembered. We now certainly have renewed appreciation and respect for you as our representative in Congress.

We thank you again for your time, hard work, and interest in the well-being of all of us in the 1st Congressional District of Alabama.

We look forward to seeing you again and may God bless you, your family and the United States of America.

*Sincerely,
A Mobile Resident*

